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United States Department of Agriculture

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MAY 7, 1941 :
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET
BY
Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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MODERN CARROT REGULAR VEGETABLE-OF-ALL-TRADES

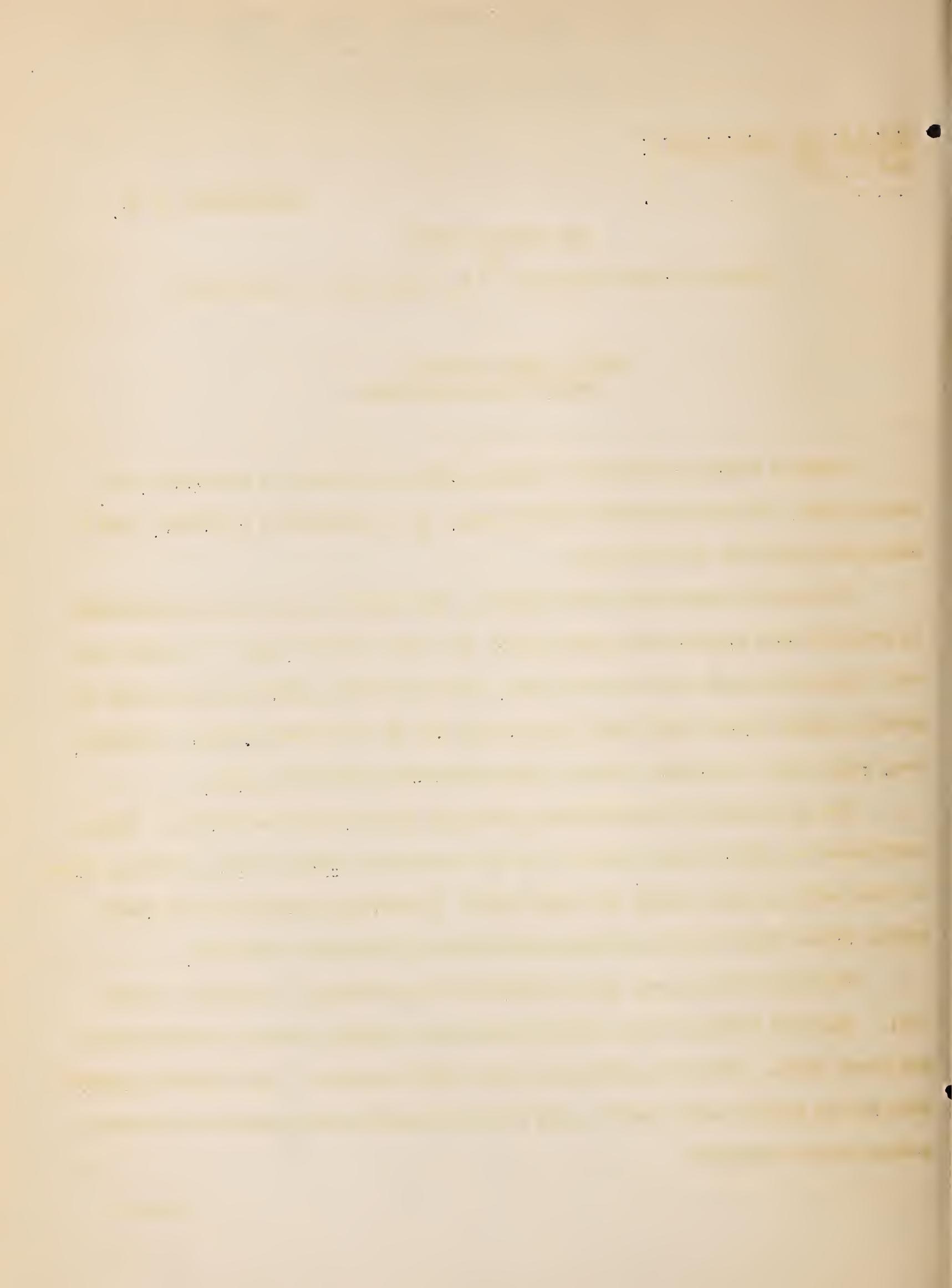
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Today's carrot is about all anyone could ask of any one vegetable. It tastes good. It is fashionably streamlined. It is attractive in color. And it rates high with the nutritionists.

It was not always thus with carrots. One doesn't have to be an old-timer to remember when carrots were sold mostly in a very mature stage -- so hard that only cows were expected to eat them raw. These old-time carrots did not have the gently sloping curves from leafy top to root tip of the modern carrot. Usually, too, they were a very pale yellow, strong-flavored, and often woody.

Better methods of distribution have done much to improve carrots. Under refrigeration, fresh young carrots with good color are shipped from producing areas to many parts of the country the year round. Furnishing carrots for the whole United States right now are Arizona, California, Louisiana, and Texas.

In recent years, too, plant scientists have improved the carrot a great deal. They are trying to get carrots with long, tapering roots, free from hard and woody cores. They are working for more tender carrots -- for smoother carrots that can be scraped more easily. And they are breeding for carrots of a deeper orange color throughout.



In general, the deeper the color of the carrot--the better a source of vitamin A it is. That's because the coloring matter in carrots is a yellow pigment known as carotene. Human beings can convert carotene into vitamin A in their bodies.

The chemical name "carotene" stems directly from the word carrot. Carotene extracted from carrots can be prepared today as beautiful orange-yellow crystals. Ordinarily, the carotene is sold in solution with oil as a base.

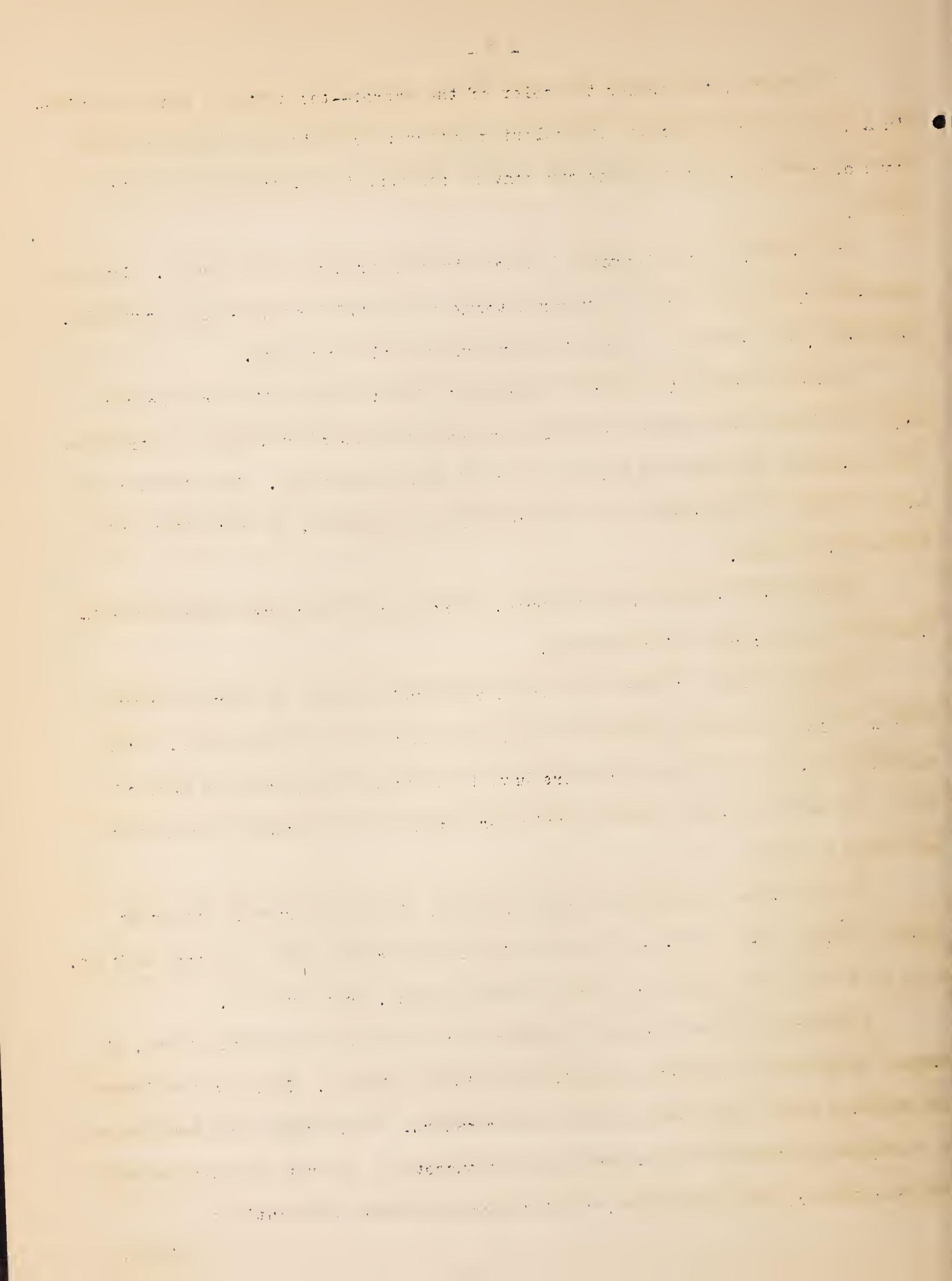
Because vitamin A is such an important item in a good diet and because both yellow and green leafy vegetables are good sources of carotene -- nutritionists recommend at least one serving a day of these vegetables. They include carrots, as they do other green and yellow-colored vegetables, in their lists of "protective" foods.

Besides the vitamin A they supply, carrots are also a good source of calcium and a good source of riboflavin.

Partly because of their food value and partly because of carrot improvement -- this vegetable's popularity has leaped in the past twenty years. Both commercial growers and home gardeners have taken to planting more and more of them. Per capita, we are eating nearly three times as many carrots today as we were back in 1920.

On the market, carrots are sold two ways. That is they sell either as mature carrots with the tops off, or as fresh bunch carrots with the tops left on. Most of those on the market now are the fresh, young, bunch carrots.

According to home economics experts in the Department of Agriculture, the carrot is a regular vegetable-of-all-trades in the kitchen. It is part and parcel of numerous stews, pot roasts, soups, and chowders. Carrots and peas have become a combination almost as well-established as succotash. Carrots go into vegetable and nut loaves, into sandwiches, and into many vegetable combinations.



Raw carrot is one of the very best of all salad joiners. Its mild flavor and bright color combine well with the distinctive flavor and pale color of celery, cabbage, and cucumbers. Serve the carrot in slender sticks cut lengthwise of the root. Or cube the carrots or shred them on an ordinary cheese grater.

Many people like shredded carrot served alone. And it is good in combination with shredded cabbage, held together with a salad dressing. Ground peanuts may or may not be added to the cabbage and carrot. Another favorite is shredded carrot gelatin salad. Pineapple or orange are two good companions for carrots in these salads.

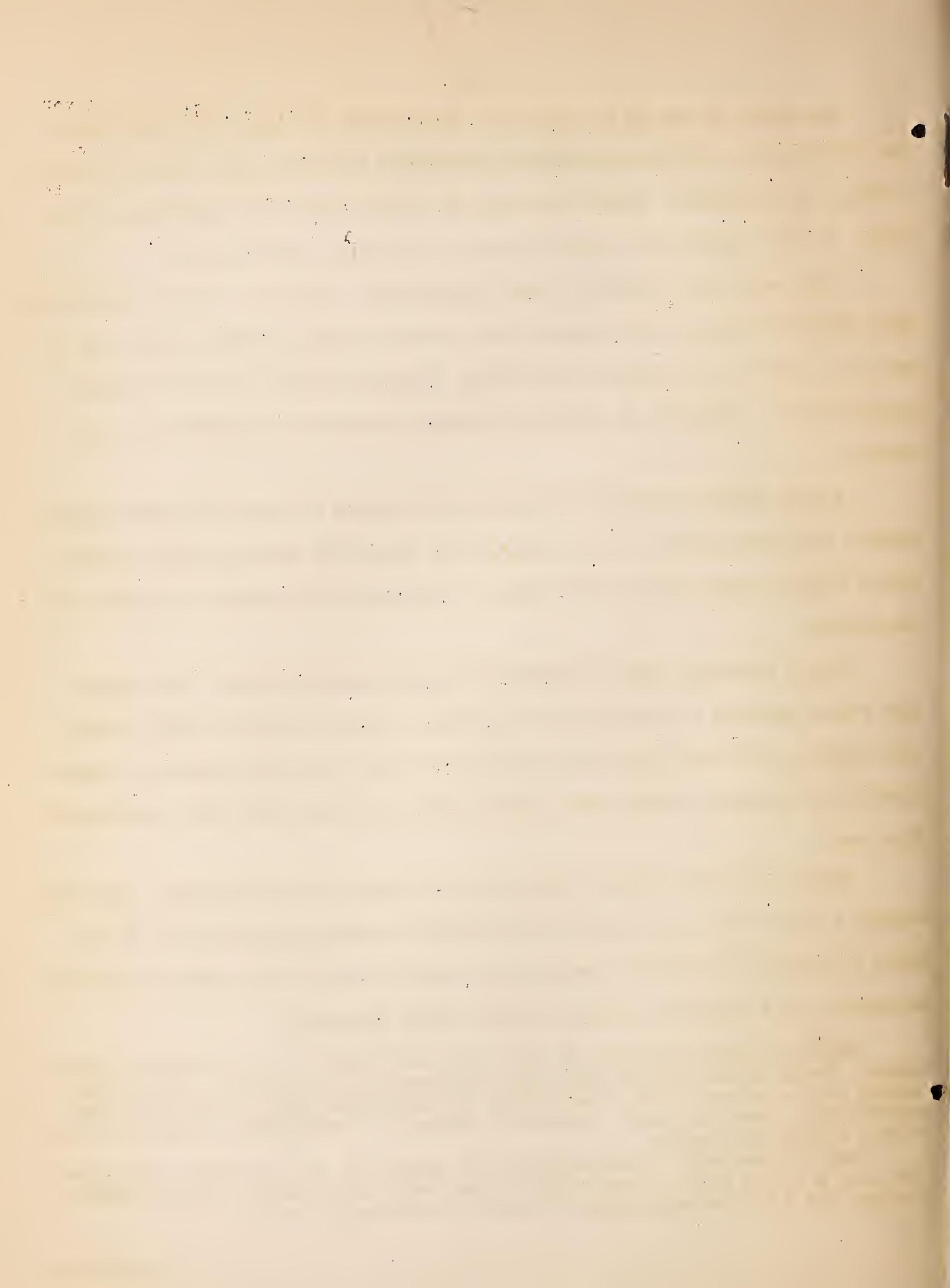
A good crunchy sandwich filling is grated carrot in combination with chopped peanuts and salad dressing. Or, a simpler one is made by creaming butter, adding finely chopped carrots and a little salt. For every cup of carrots, use about 1/4 cut butter.

Many a vegetable plate is brightened up with cooked carrots. Here again, they can be combined with many other vegetables. Outside leaves of celery boiled with carrots, or carrots fried with apples add variety and taste contrast. Cooked carrots are something unusual with a cheese sauce over them--and a more substantial dish too.

However you cook carrots, their color will stay bright throughout. And their vitamin A value will remain intact at all ordinary cooking temperatures. To conserve the calcium in carrots, though, it is best to use as little water as possible in cooking and to serve the liquid with the cooked vegetable.

Carrots sliced and cooked in water will take about 10 to 15 minutes to cook tender. Young carrots boiled whole will take from 15 to 20 minutes. These young carrots may be scraped first, then boiled, but many cooks like to simply wash the carrots first, then boil them. After the carrots are tender the skins may then be removed quickly and easily.

Another good way to cook carrots is to slice them in a casserole, then bake with just a little water. Serve plain carrots with melted butter, finely chopped parsley, and a little lemon juice to bring out their mild flavor.

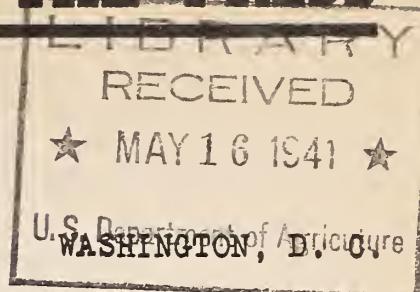


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INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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MAY 14, 1941 :



THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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GOOD MANAGERS GET BETTER DIETS

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The good home manager provides a better diet for the family, than does the poor manager. Nutritionists have known this for years.

Just how much difference good management can make in the nutrition of the Nation is shown by the Consumer Purchases Study. This study was made by five government agencies to find what families over the country get for the money they spend.

Some families get good diets and some families get poor diets, even when they all spend exactly the same amount for food -- that's one picture that Dr. Hazel K. Stiebeling, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, found when she analyzed food records from this study.

For fifteen cents a person a meal, for instance, here are the diets that families in cities and villages in the North and West were getting.

15¢ A MEAL CAN BUY EITHER GOOD OR POOR DIET

QUALITY OF DIET THESE ARE THE FAMILIES WHO GOT EACH QUALITY OF DIET

GOOD



FAIR



POOR



EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS 2 PERCENT OF FAMILIES SPENDING 15¢ A PERSON A MEAL.

BUREAU OF HOME ECONOMICS

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"Since the money spent in every case was the same," says Doctor Stiebeling, a food economist in the Bureau of Home Economics, "obviously it was good management or bad management of this money that made the difference in the quality of the diets."

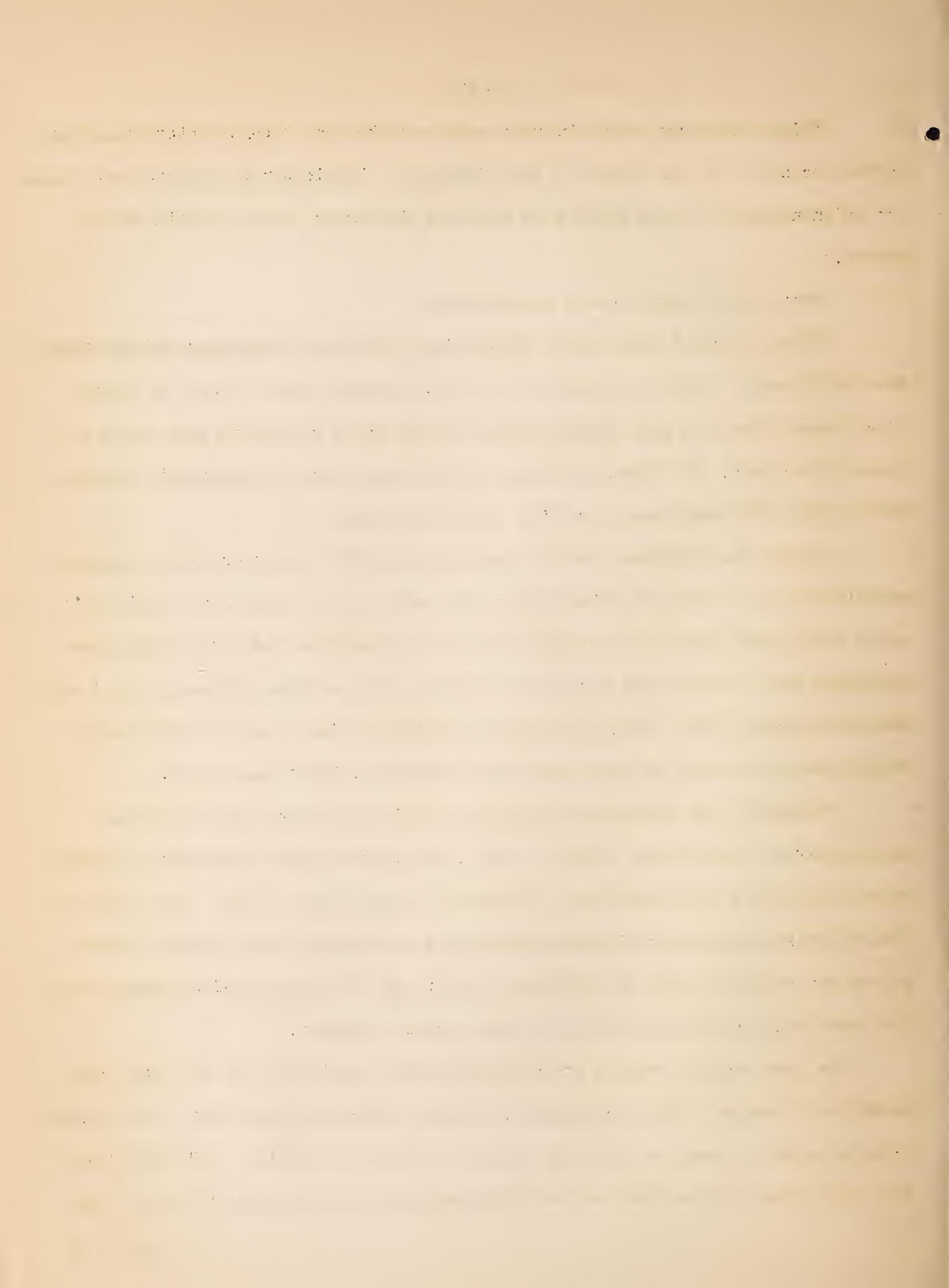
What does it take to be a good manager?

"First of all," says Doctor Stiebeling, "it takes a knowledge of the foods the family needs. Only a person who has this knowledge will be sure of buying first foods first. A good manager finds fifteen cents a person a meal ample allowance for food. She finds it enough to buy a diet that is generously adequate and to allow for considerable variety in food choices.

"Spent wisely fifteen cents a person a meal (45¢ a day or \$3.15 a person a week) will buy: One quart of milk for every child in the family and a pint for every adult every day; four or five servings of vegetables and fruits daily for everyone; four or five eggs a week for children, two or three for adults, and some more for cooking; meat, fish, or poultry about five times a week; a daily cereal dish; bread and butter at every meal; and dessert at least once a day.

"Actually, the difference between good diets and poor diets is in the amounts of the 'protective' foods -- milk, eggs, green leafy vegetables, and vitamin-C rich fruits and vegetables -- included in each type of diet. Some forms of foods furnish protective vitamins and minerals more cheaply than others. When prices or prejudices make it necessary to cut down on one type of protective food, the wise manager safeguards diets by using more of others.

"A good manager working on a limited budget capitalizes on the fact that there isn't always a close relationship between price and food value. Whole-grain cereals cooked at home can take the place of ready-to-eat kinds. She knows that the less tender cuts of meat are as nutritious as choice steaks and chops. She



knows that for many uses evaporated and dry milk are as good as fresh milk -- and that standard grades of canned goods are just as nourishing as those of the fancy class.

"In these and many other ways it is possible to cut cost without cutting down nutritive quality at the same time. But cutting food costs intelligently can be done only if the homemaker knows food values. There are plenty of ways today to get this knowledge -- in books, magazines, bulletins, or first-hand from local nutritionists."

Next qualification for a good manager is that she be a wise buyer.

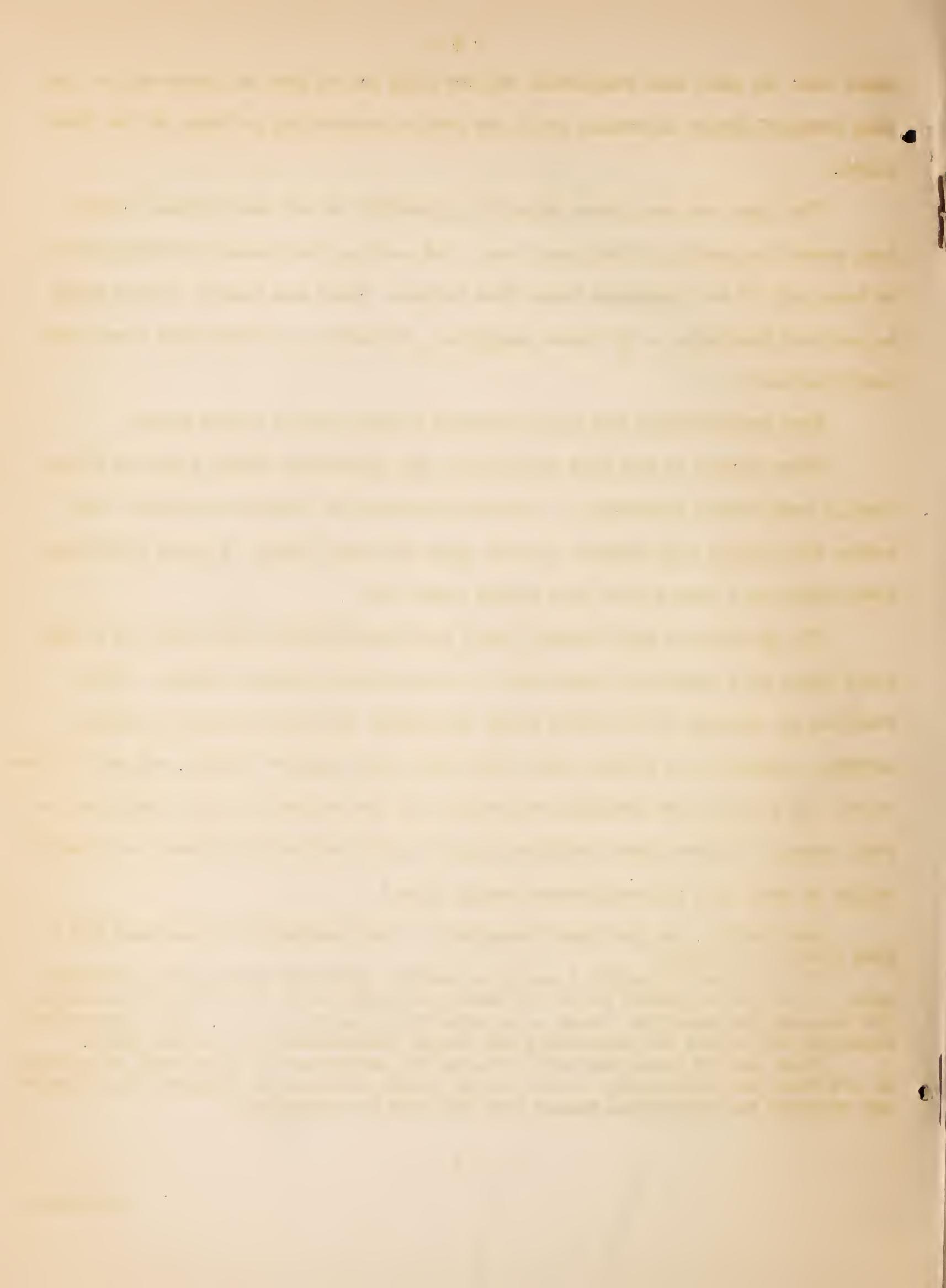
"Wise buying is the same whether you are purchasing string beans or a new dress," says Doctor Stiebeling. "It means learning to recognize quality, then buying the quality best adapted to your needs and your purse. A smart food buyer reads labels and learns what food grades stand for.

"On the farm, a good manager plans the home-produced food supply on a year round basis with pencil and paper just as she does her grocery dollars. Farm families the country over produce about two-thirds of their own food in their gardens, orchards, and fields, with their milk cows, poultry flocks, and other livestock. As a rule, farm families are better fed than village or city families, our study shows. But many farm families could be still better fed without any greater outlay of cash by a well-worked-out yearly plan."

And finally, but not least important, a good manager is a good cook and a good meal planner.

"Little does it profit a woman to assemble foods of the highest nutritive value if she can't present it to her family attractively," says Doctor Stiebeling. "To interest the appetite, there is no substitute for well-cooked food, tastefully seasoned, and served in interesting and varied combinations with other foods.

"And just as there are helpful rules for selecting the right kind of a diet, so are there helpful cooking rules -- that enable the cook to preserve the vitamins and minerals and other food values that she buys so carefully."



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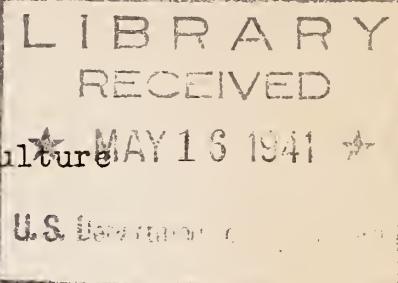
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THE MARKET BASKET
by
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture



TEXTILE TERMS

Every trade has a language all its own, and the textile industry is no exception. Take such terms as "yarn count," "two-by-two-ply," "reprocessed wool," and "lisle" -- to mention but a few.

"If a woman knows the meaning of the words on the fabrics and clothing she buys, she can make her own money go further, and she'll be helping her country too," according to Miss Ruth O'Brien, textile and clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

"The other day, Miss Harriet Elliott of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply called attention to the tendency of some manufacturers to make adjustments in quality in order to maintain price levels," continued Miss O'Brien. "This gives those manufacturers who are eager to safeguard their reputation, an added incentive for putting informative labels on their goods. It also spurs the woman buyer to learn what these labels mean.

"True, definitions have not been agreed upon for all textile terms. But the trend is for standards -- for names and terms that let women know what they are buying. Many such are in use. Women and clerks are learning to speak the same language.

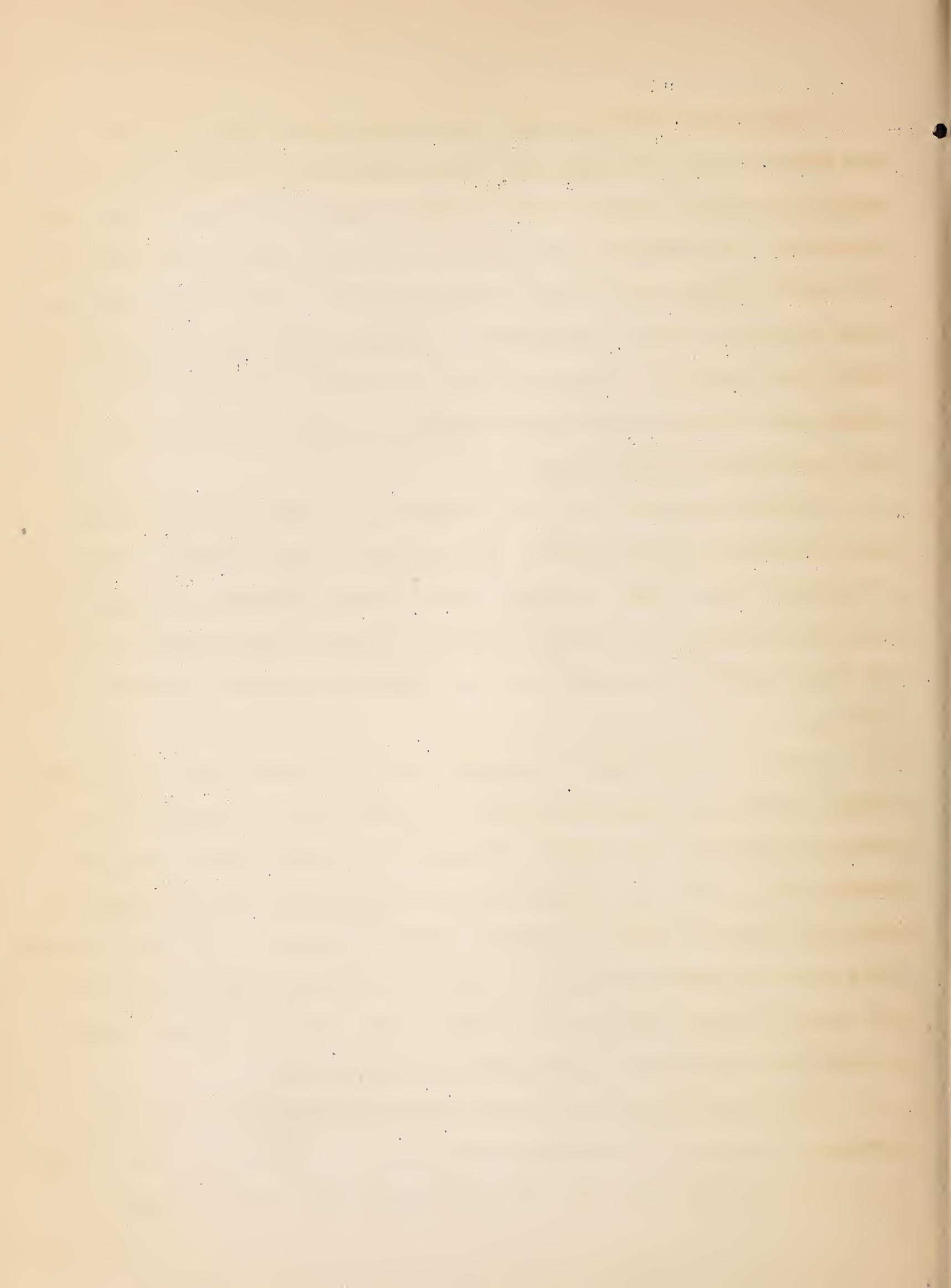


"Yarn count, sometimes called threat count, simply means the number of warp yarns (the lengthwise ones) per inch of fabric and the number of filling yarns (the crosswise ones) per inch of fabric. As usually written the warp count comes first. For example a heavy muslin sheet 74 by 66 means 74 warp yarns per inch and 66 filling yarns per inch. Sometimes if both counts are the same, the count is stated as square, for example, '80 square percale' means 80 yarns per inch in each direction. Knowing yarn count is important in judging quality. A higher count fabric has yarns closer together and, other things being equal, it will be stronger and more durable.

"Manufacturers often fill the air space of low count fabrics with a mixture of starch and other materials. Such a mixture, called 'filler,' 'sizing,' or 'loading,' often washes out in the first or second laundering. It adds little to the actual value of the material, although it improves the appearance of the new cloth so much that consumers are often fooled about quality," explained Miss O'Brien.

"Wool -- as 'new wool,' 'reprocessed wool,' or 'reused wool' -- has caused plenty of grief in buying practices, but it is soon going to be easier for consumers to distinguish these fibers. A new act of Congress, known as the Wool Products Act of 1939, and scheduled to go into effect July 14 of this year, provides that labels on every wool product -- fabric or garment -- will have to state the exact percentages of each kind of wool. The labels also will have to tell of any other fiber used, such as cotton, rayon or silk. Power to enforce the law has been given by Congress to the Federal Trade Commission.

"For the new law to have its best effect, consumers need to know the meanings of the names of the different kinds of wool. 'Reprocessed wool,' according to the act, means fiber made from wool that has been previously woven or



felts into a wool product, but never used by a consumer. 'Reused wool' is fiber made from wool or reprocessed wool which has been spun, woven, knitted or felts into a wool product and used by a consumer. New wool, of course, is not necessarily the best, for there are both good and inferior grades of new wool.

"Further evidence of the movement to standardize textile terms and labels for the protection of both consumers and scrupulous manufacturers and distributors are the Trade Practice Rules of the Federal Trade Commission on rayon and concerning shrinkage of cotton. Now, material containing rayon must be so labeled. In former days, just to illustrate the effectiveness of the rule, a certain material often used in making women's slips, was labeled merely 'satin,' no matter what yarn it contained, and even though 'satin' means silk to most consumers. Now the label must read 'Rayon Satin,' or 'Rayon and Silk Satin,' if such be the case. Further the fibers will be named in the order of their percent by weight in the fabric, with the highest first.

"On the shrinkage question -- use of such terms as 'Full Shrunk,' 'Pre-shrunk,' 'Will not Shrink' are prohibited unless the cotton fabric so labeled has no residual shrinkage. 'Residual Shrinkage' simply means that the cloth will shrink more when laundered. Look for the labels that state the exact amount of residual shrinkage to expect. If the percent is higher than three, think twice and usually don't buy," suggested the specialist. "Three percent means more than an inch of shrinkage for each yard. If the fabric is not labeled with facts about shrinkage, it is usually wise to assume that the cloth will shrink. Use of the newer and excellent labels, giving shrinkage in exact terms, is spreading rapidly. Early they appeared on men's shirts, but now can be found even on much piece goods.



"Broadcloth is another puzzler in textile terms," Miss O'Brien pointed out.

"Some cotton broadcloth is a fine cloth, especially good for men's shirts. Other cotton broadcloth is poor. The 'ply' of the yarn, that is the number of single strands twisted together to form the yarn for weaving, tells much about the quality. 'Two-by-two,' two ply in both warp and filling is good. In such broadcloth, the yarn count is about 146 by 72 and the material is strong. 'Two-by-one,' broadcloth, in which only the warp is ply, is usually coarser and the yarn count usually lower, often about 112 by 58. Some goods of a much lower yarn count is sold as broadcloth, but the quality is very low.

"'Lisle' will be heard more frequently if cotton stockings are generally accepted with a war cut in the quantity of silk hose. 'Lisle' originally was a fine hard linen thread made in France. Now it means a smooth cotton yarn made of high grade long staple cotton, tightly twisted and treated to remove the fuzzy fibers seen on many other cottons. Lisle is also 'mercerized,' which means that it is chemically treated, as many cotton yarns and fabrics are, for more gloss, to be smoother, stronger, and to take the dye better. Lisle stockings, by comparison with other cotton ones, cost more but are more attractive and better wearing."

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CANNING INVENTORY

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This year—with all America defense minded—both home and commercial canning are taking on new importance.

To help stock the Nation's pantry for emergency needs, commercial canneries are planning to increase their output of certain nourishing canned vegetables. The U. S. Department of Agriculture last month initiated a program intended to expand production of tomatoes grown for canning to more than half again what it was last year.

"What makes good sense for the Nation's pantry often makes good sense for the family pantry also," says Dr. Louise Stanley, chief of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Home Economics. "Certainly millions of quarts of good food stored away in home pantries are important to both family and national preparedness."

"With a home canning program dovetailed into a carefully planned home-production program, many families can assure themselves of a year round diet that is better balanced and more varied than one they could afford to buy entirely at the store. And when food prices rise, the woman with plenty of canned food in the pantry can count herself doubly provident."

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Home canning, of course, is most economical on farms or in villages where families have the land to grow their own garden stuff. Usually it is only when fresh fruits and vegetables are available cheap from nearby that it is economical for city families to buy food to can.

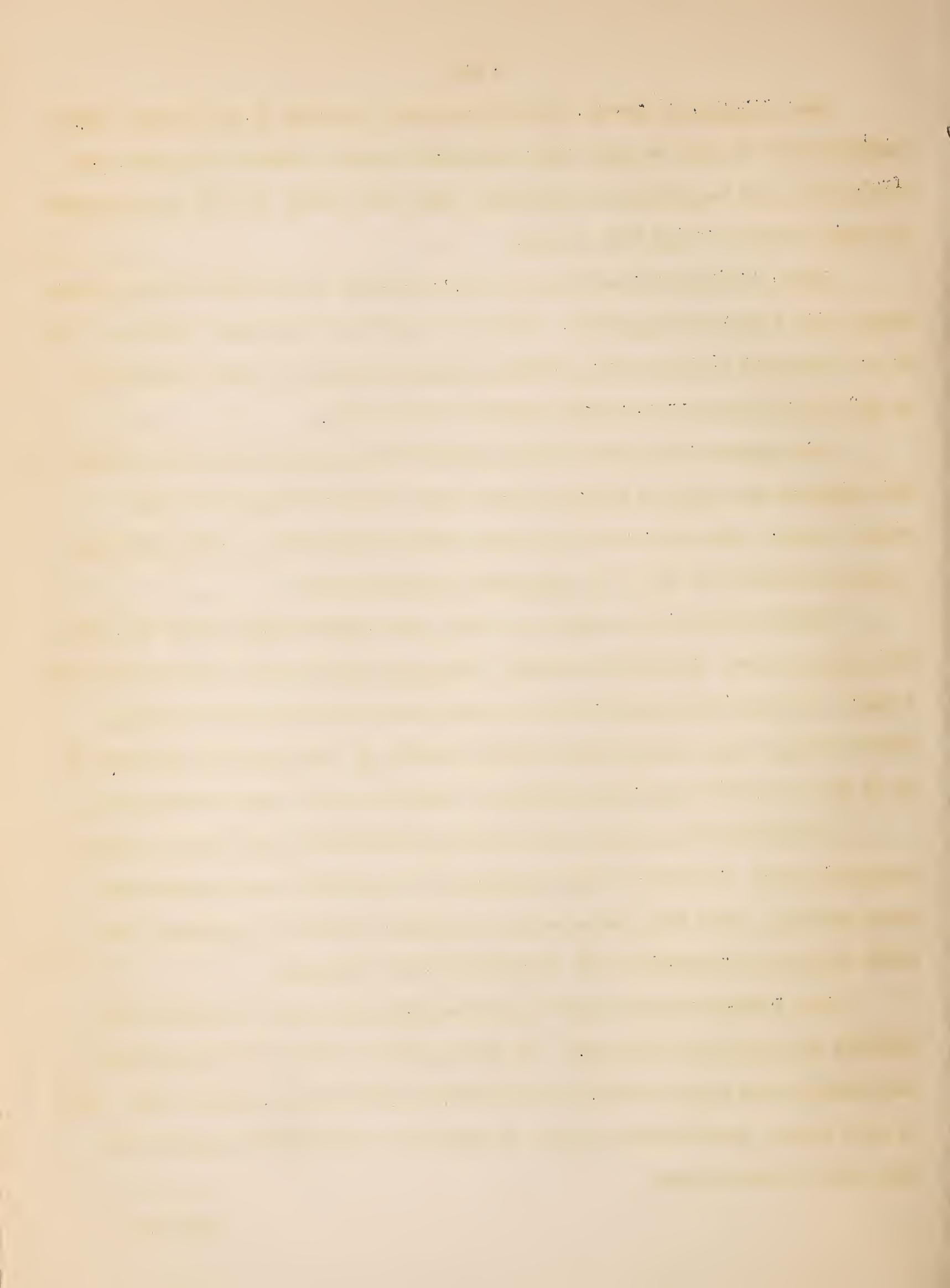
Sugar, an important material for fruit canners, is an item that some homemakers have been wondering about. However, according to the Sugar Division of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, there are ample reserves of sugar either here in the United States or on nearby islands for all needs.

The homemaker who plans to "can as usual" this season will want to check her equipment and supplies before she gets into the full swing of the busy summer season. Here are some of the main points she'll need to check according to home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

CANNING BUDGET—If you live on a farm, your canning budget will fit into your garden plans. In making a budget, figure how much food the family needs for a year. And take into consideration how long fresh foods are out of season. Canning budgets vary considerably from one section of the country to another, so it is best to consult the State College of Agriculture for help in making one.

THE CANNER—If you plan to can non-acid vegetables, you'll need a steam pressure canner. For only in such a canner is it possible to get temperatures above boiling. These high temperatures are needed to kill the organisms that cause spoilage in practically all vegetables except tomatoes.

Steam pressure canners need to be re-checked each year to see that the pressure gage registers correctly. If these gages are taken off and sent into the factory where they were made, manufacturers will check and adjust them. Also, in some States, agricultural colleges or local home demonstration agents will help check pressure gages.



For processing acid foods--fruits and tomatoes--it is best to use a water bath canner. There is little that needs to be checked on such a canner except to see that all the parts are together. There needs to be a tight fitting lid and a rack for the bottom to set cans or jars on. A wash boiler or a bucket makes a good water-bath canner if it is high enough to permit covering the cans or jars with 1 to 2 inches of water.

Not highly recommended by home economists, but possible ways of canning certain fruits and tomatoes are steamers, oven, and the open kettle methods. Tin cans should never be used for oven canning. Nor should peaches, pears, or apricots be processed in the oven, because they develop a brownish discoloration.

CANS OR JARS--Always buy new rubber rings for glass jars. Good rubber rings stretch to twice their length. Discard any jars or caps that show cracks, chips, or dents. Porcelain-lined metal lids should be thrown away if the lining is the least bit loose. If wire clamps on lightning type jars are loose, tighten them by bending the wire down in the middle on top, and inward at the sides.

If you use tin cans, you'll want to make sure that you have the right kind of tin for the kind of food included in your canning budget. You'll need C-enamel lined cans for corn, lima beans, kidney beans, and succotash. C-enamel cans have a dull finish and light gold color. You'll need the deeper gold, brighter R-enamel for beets, all kinds of berries, cherries, cranberries, plums, pumpkin, and squash. Plain tin is satisfactory for all other fruits and vegetables.

WATER SUPPLY--Water that is suitable for drinking is usually all right for canning purposes. But very hard water may make the tissues of vegetables tough and make fruit sirups look cloudy. If you have no other water to use but hard water, you can soften it by boiling the water, then straining it through several thicknesses of muslin. Or boil the water, allow it to stand until a fine precipitate settles to the bottom of the pan. Then pour off the water from the "settlings" and use it.

DR. W. J. GRIFFITH

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